

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 8 have been amended. New claims 24-25 have been added. Claims 1-4, 7-11, 14 and 20-25 are currently pending. Reexamination and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by USP 6,439,249 to Pan et al. ("Pan"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner's courtesy in granting the undersigned a personal interview on February 8, 2006 is greatly appreciated. During this interview, the Examiner and the undersigned studied the teachings of Pan with respect to the claimed invention. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for his helpful suggestions and ideas.

Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended to recite that each wire branch is separate from and releasably attached to one of the ribs, and that the interconnecting wire that connects the plurality of wire branches is separate from and removably attached to the top end of the pole. See page 3, lines 10-21 of the specification.

In contrast, it was pointed out at the interview that Pan does not teach or suggest (i) wire branches that are separate from and releasably attached to one of the ribs, and (ii) an interconnecting wire that is separate from and removably attached to the top end of the pole.

First, the wire branches 8 that extend through the hollow awning tubes 3 in Pan are permanently secured inside the hollow awning tubes 3. See column 2, line 53 to column 3, line 8, which describes a connector 31 and a slot 32 for holding each separate illuminator 5, where the connectors 31 and the slots 32 are not removable. The illuminators 5 are replaceable, but these wire branches 8 are not releasable. Therefore, the wire branches 8 are **not** separate from, and are **not** removably attached to, the awning tubes 3.

Second, even if the circuit board 2 in Pan can be considered to be an "interconnecting wire", it is **not** separate from and removably attached to the top end of the pole.

Thus, claims 1 and 8 recite a wiring system for coupling LED lights to a patio umbrella that differs from the wiring systems disclosed in Pan and Mai. The wiring system in claims 1 and 8 is advantageous because it can be easily attached and removed from a patio umbrella, and is attached at positions (e.g., adjacent the top of the pole) which minimize complexity in its construction, and which reduce the hazards to the users.

In contrast, the wiring system in Pan is fixed and cannot be replaced, and must be run through all of the pole 7 and the supports (ribs) 4, thereby complicating the construction of the patio umbrella, and increasing the hazards to the user.

Thus, claims 1 and 8, and claims 2-4, 7, 9-11, 14 and 20-25 depending therefrom, and are submitted to be in condition for allowance.

In addition, new claims 20-25 are submitted to define additional patentable subject matter:

1. Claims 20 and 22 recite that the interconnecting wire forms a ring about the pole, which is also not disclosed in Pan.

2. Claims 21 and 23 recite that the interconnecting wire and the wire branches are formed as a single wire, which is also not disclosed in Pan.

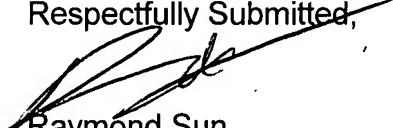
3. Claims 24 and 25 recite a pole strap that removably attaches the interconnecting wire to the top end of the pole. Pan does not teach or suggest any strap that removably attaches any interconnecting wire to the top end of the pole.

For these reasons, claims 20-25 are submitted to define additional allowable subject matter.

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Thus, all pending claims are submitted to be in condition for allowance. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner has any amendments or ideas that might place this application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,


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I hereby certify that this paper and its enclosures are being deposited with the United States Postal service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date shown below.

Date: March 6, 2006

By:


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